



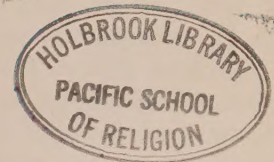
# The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● MARCH 1978

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# A Compelling Pilgrimage

In the *Dialogue in community*, which is a statement adopted by the theological consultation in Thailand in 1977, it has been affirmed that to participate fully in the Mission of God, 'we would humbly share with all our fellow human beings in a compelling pilgrimage'. In the introduction, the report mentions that the 'Christian community within the human community has a common heritage and a distinctive message to share'. It talks of the need to reflect on the nature of the community we seek, the relevance of dialogue in the life of the churches and how they can be communities of service and witness without diluting their faith. Such an enquiry needs to be informed by a knowledge of different religions and societies as well as by insights gained through actual dialogues. As such, reflection does not justify detachment but should be in the context of the 'sharp conflicts and sufferings of humankind'. Firstly, it deals with *community*. It affirms that God 'willed relationship with Himself and between all that He has brought to life; that to that end He has enabled the formation of communities'. Affirming the many kinds of relationships that exist in communities, it has pointed out the many changes that are taking place and their consequences to the relationships of communities. The 'richness of the diversity of the community of humankind' has been emphasised. The report takes note of the fact that 'the Christian contribution to dialogue is weakened by division among Christians'. In the second part, it is stated that *dialogue* 'has to be described, experienced and developed as a life-style'. It is 'a fundamental part of our Christian service within community'. It has 'a distinctive and rightful place within Christian life'. The theological questions are to be proceeded 'with repentance... with humility.... with joy.... and with integrity'. Pointing out to the dangers of syncretism, the report says in conclusion, 'welcome' and 'take care'.

Besides the official report, four group reports on relationships between religions, ideologies and cultures are included. On the whole, it is a most valuable and refreshing report which needs to be widely read, discussed and used for formulating guidelines. To promote discussions and to continue the conversation, we would like to make some comments and observations.

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(a) It is good that instead of 'unique message' the phrase 'distinct message' is used in the report. However, is it necessary to mention that the Christian community has a *distinct* message to share? Our hope should be that such a distinct message should become obvious as an end-result. For example, because of the 'dialogue in community' in Bangkok, the delegates already noted 'a distinctive character of Buddhism in Northern Thailand'. Many a time dialogue has degenerated into a monologue because of the attitude arising out of the distinct message. In the bygone eras, our missionary forefathers have shown extraordinary patience, perseverance and scholarship in not only studying the new language of the area but also in promoting scripts as well as producing new dictionaries. Men like Kittel, Pope and Caldwell have made unique contributions. At the same time, people of the area were pictured as pagan and uncivilised so that there was the necessity for missionaries to bring in light to remove darkness! Each religion and each ideology may feel that it has a distinct message. Recently, many people have come to India from different parts of the world (not because of advertisements), seeking a distinct message. It is not the discussion of a distinct message, which in any case is a 'faith statement', that is needed but an actual meeting, feeling and sharing. By God's Grace, it may then result in a distinct message.

(b) The delegates found their worship period so meaningful that it 'was also a stimulus to take seriously the worship and meditation of others'. They were also challenged to 'examine how their (other people's) faiths and ideologies have given direction to their daily living and actually affect dialogues on both sides'. This is vital and imperative for the Christians and a great help for dialogue.

(c) There is a clear acknowledgement of the problems among Christians, concerning the unsolved question of the authority of the Bible and the difference of opinion with regard to combining Christian worship and the meditative use of the holy books of other faiths. The acknowledgement of 'our consciousness to our tensions' is indeed a good beginning. Certainly 'it should evoke in us an attitude of real humility towards



all people'. More emphasis could have been laid on individual-based, rather than the programme-oriented dialogue. The report is commended to 'member churches' and not to 'members of churches'. Also, dialogue is not to be arranged but should be spontaneous and in some cases unexpected. We should move away from 'arranged dialogue'. It becomes unnatural and artificial, leading to an exchange of platitudes. It is difficult for a member of the congregation reading the report to get a clear message. A supplementary document or a pamphlet, explaining the varieties of existing relationships, daily conversations and patterns of life and how they could become a dialogue leading towards sharing of experiences and messages, could be prepared for the ordinary members of congregations.

(d) A typical Western mode of divisions into categories of 'service' and 'witness' is found in the report also. Such divisions in the Indian context is irrelevant. Dialogue is considered a fundamental part of Christian service. It is also stated that dialogues give opportunity for 'authentic witness'. It has commended to the Churches 'the way of dialogue as one in which Jesus Christ can be confessed in the world'. Is it intentional that the word 'proclamation' has been avoided in the report? Dialogue itself is witnessing in certain situations, while in others dialogue may be an aspect of witnessing. Should we necessarily explain and divide them into categories?

(e) The emphasis that we have to approach theological questions with repentance, humility, joy and integrity is to be greatly appreciated.

(f) Is it necessary at all to talk about syncretism? The Christian community has generally been so secluded and triumphalistic that perhaps after this report we have to wait for at least a generation more before talking about syncretism! Unfortunately to the Christians

syncretism has become a bogey or a phantom. To some it has become a means of escape into inactivity. The dialogue, which this report explains and talks about, is the last thing which may bring about syncretism. It is time we grew out of this fear.

(g) The conference has clearly underlined the calling of Christians to participate 'fully in the mission of God with the courage of conviction to enable us to be adventurous and take risks'. It is emphasised that Christians are 'genuine fellow pilgrims' along with the others in the 'compelling pilgrimage'. In the context of all these, it is disappointing to note that the final message of the report is 'to take care' (meaning 'beware'). Can these possibly be the words of the inheritors of the faith of Abraham? None of the spirit-filled men and women of deep conviction, who have crossed the frontiers and who continuously attempt to cross frontiers, would ever take the advice to 'take care'. The blessing of the Church is always to go in the name of God and with God. God forbid that such a day should come when we have to end our blessing with a message to 'take care'.

The report has aptly described our human situation as a 'compelling pilgrimage'. There is also a sincere and deep desire that the others should consider Christians as 'genuine fellow pilgrims'. The pilgrimage has not started now. It began a long time ago. During the course of years, we Christians have given cause, intentionally or otherwise, to be classified into a particular category. Therefore, the challenge is all the more relevant and crucial. 'To assure our partners in dialogue' of our genuineness is indeed an uphill task. However, as Christians, we believe in the new possibilities which God offers us every day of our lives. This report, we hope, will provide us with a new meaning and understanding of our responsibilities in our ongoing pilgrimage.

## Honorary Bishops!

### (A REMINISCENCE)

In the Church of South India we have a corps of honorary workers. This corps consists of Licensed Lay Readers, Honorary Deacons and Honorary Presbyters. This corps appears to have been created to fill lacunae in the paid echelons.

'When you have honorary men up to the level of presbyters', a Non-Christian Lawyer asked me, 'why don't you have Honorary Bishops?' The question appears logical. When women are ordained as deacons and Presbyters, why not consecrate Honorary Bishops? They will be able to act as *shock-absorbers* and spare regular bishops 'many a sorrow, many a tear,' many an uncomfortable situation.

Honorary Bishops can function on commissions of enquiry and do much of the work which our Bishops

are required to do. The regular Bishops can give their time to the development of the spiritual and cultural aspects of the work in the diocese.

I wish someone at the Synod level will be bold and imaginative enough to raise this point and help the Synod to see that one can be an Honorary Bishop even if one has not been an Honorary Deacon or Presbyter. He may exercise a ministry suitably defined.

While on the topic of Honorary workers, I am reminded of a short sojourn at Hyderabad where an Honorary Presbyter is *Presbyter-in-charge* (?) of a congregation in the C.S.I. He lives in a C.S.I. parsonage, he draws some allowances and is honorary presbyter only in name. Do the rules of the C.S.I. differ from Diocese to Diocese and from person to person? Will someone look into this matter—it appears to be irregular; or do exceptions prove rules?

O. SIVARAMAIA

[MARCH 1978]



# Health and Development

Many people in the 'Third World' do not benefit from development for they lack the opportunity to achieve minimal good health. Conversely, the social and economic levels of living of these people are so low that ill health becomes an *inevitable* condition of daily life, for there is an absolute consumption level below which it is impossible for an individual or a family to be healthy. Poor health is a major condition of poverty and a key factor in the perpetuation of poverty in the Third World.

Gunnar Myrdal has pointed out that the transfer of money income from 'haves' to 'have-nots' will not by itself do much to relieve poverty. What is needed is basic improvement in the quality of the life of the poor, i.e. in the actual conditions under which the poor people live and work. Throughout most of the Third World, these conditions add up to a syndrome of helplessness: disease, malnutrition, undernutrition, high fertility, illiteracy, shelterlessness, under-employment and low income all interact cumulatively to close off avenues of escape. In addition, poverty involves a lack of access to social and economic services, lack of hope for the future, lack of willingness to risk new initiatives, lack of security. These reinforce each other; poor health and poor nutrition increase mortality, which encourages more births to achieve familial security and survival; lack of knowledge worsens nutrition and health; ill health induces malnutrition by interfering with appetite, digestion and absorption of foods; poor housing or lack of access to piped water endangers health.

The interrelationship of these conditions makes it imperative that any developmental assistance must be through a multi-sectoral approach. In other words, the aim must be to improve the quality of the daily life of the poor. This is a social rather than a purely economic objective. Therefore, what is needed is a reorientation of development from production through distribution and consumption; the content of GNP, i.e. what is produced and for whom should take priority over its rate of increase. Resources should be redirected—from concentration on the modern 'growth' sectors to the traditional and rural sectors, where most of the poor are found. This means, in health, that we stop following traditional patterns; these emphasized curative services are hospital and urban based using technologic and specialised medicine and result in national health resources and opportunities being distributed inversely in relation to national health needs. Rather, national health promotion should begin where the problem lies, i.e., in the rural areas and amongst other underserved groups, and health efforts and resources should be redistributed accordingly. These efforts and resources must be integrated with those of the other sectors, if progress is to be made in improving the living and working conditions of the poor.

The viability and the momentum of development can best be assured if the poor are organised to support that process from below. Whatever forms such organization may take—co-operatives, unions, village committees etc.—

it must enable the poor to exploit their strength in numbers and to pool their resources, not only for the common pursuit of socio-economic improvement, but also for the defence of whatever gains they achieve. The initiative to organise must come from the poor themselves; they must perceive the causes of their poverty and must share a common identity as poor people and not solely as members of a certain ethnic group, caste, religion, or local regional group. This constitutes a further reason why the poor should become 'self-reliant' and participate as fully as possible in development activities. In health, 'participation' requires, by definition, that the poor define their health and other problems on the basis of their *own* perceptions of this reality, rather than on the basis of the perceptions of outsiders—however technically qualified the latter may be. There may be a world of difference between, for instance, what a doctor sees as the 'needs' of a village community and what that community itself understands about its wants. The doctor may assume that the village needs a clinic and an immunisation programme. On the other hand, the village community may decide that it needs better housing or a road to take its produce to the market or wells for better irrigation—and the community will be right and their decision will probably do more to improve their health than the medical interventions of the doctor. Of course, qualified, technical guidance is needed, but people themselves must analyse and come to grips with the causes of their own problems and then work out their priorities for action.

Historically, widespread improvements in public health in the developed countries began with improvements in food supply and the introduction of safe water supplies and sewerage disposal systems, which accompanied the industrial revolution during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As for the relative contributions to sharp reductions in mortality made by nutritional and environmental improvement on the one hand and by medical science and curative health services on the other, the historical record makes it clear that there was a substantial impact from the former and an as yet undetermined impact from the latter. Purely 'treatment' or curative activities in support of the sick are very costly. Furthermore, the extent to which they can significantly and permanently alter mortality and morbidity is now being seriously questioned by the results of numerous surveys and studies.

At least in the poorest of rural areas, and on cost effectiveness grounds, priority fields of intervention might generally include—but by no means be limited to—the following; nutrition, control of infectious diseases, promotion of reproductive health including fertility regulation, environmental sanitation. The extent to which resources should be expended on pure treatment activities depends upon (a) the level of economic viability of the rural poor to support consumption in the programme area and (b) the extent to which treatment costs can be reduced through the introduction of

(Continued on page 7)



# Land to Sky Expedition!

## Invitation to 'Expedition'

When Mr. Victor Koilpillai from the W.C.C. and I were asked to go to Aizawl in Mizoram to conduct a Writers' Workshop during October 1977, we never imagined that we would be made to undertake a land to sky expedition. We successfully reached the sky, Aizawl, from the land, Silchar, after an ordeal of a nine-hour journey in a jeep along 180 kilometres of narrow ghat road.

## Destination

Mizoram is a Union Territory in North-East India, sandwiched between Bangladesh in the West and Burma in the East. Till recently it was part of the Assam State. It is surrounded by many mountains and has an area of 8,000 square miles. It has two districts, Aizawl in the North and Lungleh in the South. Aizawl is the capital city of Mizoram, situated at a height of 3,500 ft. above sea level.

## Route

Mizoram is inaccessible to outsiders except through the north by a narrow strip of road from Silchar in Assam. There is no transportation facility except by a bus once a day to and from Aizawl. Journeys in these parts are always uncertain till you reach the destination. The Jeep is the only seemingly comfortable mode of conveyance and the Mizos seem to be expert drivers. The roads are not like the roads of accredited hill stations. The road to Aizawl has to pass through several hills and is badly maintained. The bends and sudden turnings, the frequent landslides because of loose rock, the dark deep ravines on the sides, the rib-racking jolting, the outburst of clouds followed by torrents of rain and darkness make the traveller lose hope of reaching the destination alive! Once you reach Aizawl all your discomforts and nightmares vanish like dew in the sun and you heave a sigh of relief in the cool, calm and pleasant atmosphere of Aizawl.

## Mizoram

The word 'Mizo' means 'man of the hills' and 'Ram' means 'land'. Originally these hills were known as Lushai and the people were known as Lushais. It is an entirely new land with a culture and tradition all its own. There is neither hunger nor starvation, neither beggars nor orphans. There are no thieves and robbers and so the houses do not need locks. Women, young and

old, never wear ornaments or jewellery to mar their beauty. There are no rivers, no streams, no springs, no tanks and not even wells. There is no population explosion either. The radios are not heard outside the houses, the loudspeakers do not blare, the birds make less noise. There is not even one crow! Occasionally one hears the loud shrieking of a wild lizard whose voice is similar to that of a cock. But you hear soft, pleasant devotional songs floating in the air mingled with guitar music. Such is the calm of the miracle land of Mizoram.

Skyscraper trees, wild plantains, bamboo of different types and green bushes provide a lush green scenery to feast your eyes. The simple, thin-walled bamboo houses of the Mizos on the slopes of hills in ladder rows are a beautiful sight indeed. Invariably churches are found on all plots of flat space available.

## The People

The Mizos are a healthy race of people. Men and women are of medium height and size, brown in complexion, with less prominent noses. They are cheerful and handsome. When they descend and climb on the slopes of the hills they remind us of angels in colourful costumes! The apparel of the women is simple but colourful. They dress in the Burmese style, a short thick dhoti-like colourful cloth from the hip and matching long blouses. Almost every woman wears a watch and carries an umbrella in different colours. They are slim and walk briskly. They carry long triangular baskets on their backs, hanging by a string from their heads. This is useful for collecting anything they want, from firewood to farm products. Women carry their babies on their backs in sling-like cradles. They even work comfortably with their babies on their back.

## A Christian State

Mizoram is entirely a Christian State in India. Almost all the Mizos are Christians. It has a population of about 3,50,000. Some eighty years ago the Mizos were head-hunters. The main denominations of Christianity are the Presbyterians in the North and the Baptists in the South.

In the year 1897, the Welsh Presbyterian Church sent their first missionary, the Rev. D. E. Jones, to Mizoram. He established his station in Aizawl. From 1903, the Baptists started their missionary work in the south, establishing their station at Lungleh. Both the denominations are functioning with understanding and co-operation.

Unlike Christians in the other states, Mizos have no Christian names. Each person has only one name from among the Mizos' list of indigenous names. They are Christians in action. The Mizos believe in giving tithe to God and they never fail in it. It is said that each person gives to the church at an average of Rs. 140 per year.

## The Church

The Church plays the role of their chieftain now and they respect the wishes and decisions of church bodies. They worship in churches on Sundays, Wednesdays and



Saturdays. They spend the whole of Sunday in the churches from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. On the other days they worship in the evenings. The Mizos eat a heavy breakfast before 9 a.m. and their dinner before 6 p.m., with a light refreshment of tea and bread during lunch. Both for worship and work, this system has been found very useful. The adult Sunday classes are something extraordinary. The classes are held in the forenoon inside the church buildings, in about 15 to 20 groups of fifteen to twenty. The attendance is full. They study and discuss a commentary on one of the books of the Bible. There are also Sunday classes for children.

The evening worship on Sundays is well attended by the youth. The duration of the service is one hour, and mostly the elders of the church conduct the services and preach. The Mizos are very good singers. The voices blend beautifully and the music penetrates the marrow of your bones. The beauty is that there is no accompaniment except a drum occasionally beaten. On special occasions the congregations join a circle dance outside the church. Their movements and gestures in the dance are slow and rhythmic. The dance is performed continuously for hours together to the accompaniment of choral singing and beating of drums.

In Aizawl there are about 47 churches. Each church can hold about 400 or 500 members and the Mizos feel that this will help in maintaining good pastoral care. It looks as though every street has a church!

### Development Prospects

Nature has endowed Mizoram with many resources but they are yet to be utilised for the benefit of the people. The main occupation of the Mizos is agriculture. They cut down forest trees in certain areas and clear the land for cultivation. They cultivate the land collectively for about four or five years and shift to other places. They call this 'Jhum' cultivation. They shift the place when the soil loses its fertility. Their staple food is rice and pork in addition to the vegetables grown there. Being a tropical area all vegetables are grown there. Cattle and sheep farming are not developed. Curd and butter are not in common use. Their chief export product is ginger. Tea is an indigenous plant of the hills but it is not grown. There is scope for establishing industries and handicrafts need development.

### Cost of Living

The cost of labour is high at Rs. 10 per day, much higher than that of the plains. Though the cost of living is high, the standard of living is very low. The consumer goods have to be brought from Silchar and consequently the prices of commodities are high. There are no newspapers or magazines worth the name. The population of Aizawl has registered a slight increase in recent years only due to the inflow of government employees, security forces, military units, road builders and merchants.

### Social Structures

The Mizos are free from caste and creed differences. The youth have the freedom to choose their partners, and the bridegroom pays a dowry of about Rs. 400 to

the bride's parents. There is equality, fraternity and liberty among the Mizos. For instance the boss and the worker, the rich and the poor, sit together for a meal!

### Education and Literature

56% of the population are literates. There are about 5 colleges and 100 high schools. The colleges are affiliated to the North Eastern Hill University at Shillong. There is a Theological College in Aizawl.

Mizo is their language. It is related to the Tibeto-Burmese group. They have no other literature except the Bible and a few other related books. From among these are prescribed the textbooks for studies in schools. There is no written creative literature as yet. In our writers' workshop we introduced to them the arts of news writing, magazine writing, writing plays, short stories and novels. The participants were highly educated persons. They were eager to learn about the new forms of literature. We had a lively discussion and a majority of them showed signs of writing creative literature. The Mizos buy books and are fond of reading. While the publishers in South India are struggling hard to sell a 1,000 copy edition for about five or six years, the Synod Press in Mizoram publishes books of 7,000 copy editions and sell 6,000 copies within a year! Considering the size of the population and the short period of 50 years of literacy, this is a miracle in book selling.

### Dependents on Rain!

The Mizos depend on the rain for water and the rain never fails. Rain water is collected and used for drinking, bathing, washing and for agriculture. There is no other source of water. During summer, when there is scanty rain, the people ration the water among themselves.

### The Smile of Bamboo

The bamboo flowers every twenty to twenty-five years and some variety, fifty years. The smile of bamboos never brings fortune but famine! We have heard of famines due to failure of monsoons but not of flowering of trees or plants. In Palani Hills, Kurinji Plants blossom once in twelve years, bringing plenty of honey, not so the bamboos in Mizoram.

The bamboo buds are quite tasty to eat but nobody eats the flowers. The rats are fond of them. The bamboo flowering season is of two kinds. The 'Mau' bamboos blossom at an interval of about 25 years. This is one kind of bamboo and the famine is known as 'Mautam'. The other variety of bamboo blossoms at an interval of 50 years and then the famine is known as 'Thingtam'. It is now the 'Thingtam' famine that is threatening Mizoram.

The bamboo seeds, according to scientists, seem to have a 'triggering mechanism that leads the rat population to boom'. The flowering of the bamboo results in the multiplication of rats which play havoc on the crops. When the bamboo flowers and seeds are exhausted they

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# Truth and Myth

(Mid-1977 saw the publication in England of the work 'The myth of God incarnate', edited by John Hick, a minister of the United Reformed Church. Seven weeks later a reply appeared, 'The truth of God incarnate', edited by Canon Michael Green (Anglican). The Rev. R. T. Brooks, a URC minister, who is a producer, Religious Programmes, for BBC/TV, believes we need both Truth and Myth. This is a reprint of an article of the URC monthly *Reform*, by kind permission of the editor.)

When you are confronted with a number of convinced people arguing about the fundamentals of faith, there are two questions which arise. One is 'Can I agree with these people?' The other is 'Can I pray with them?' Looking at *The myth of God incarnate* and *The truth of God incarnate*, I think the answer to the second question is yes—and I think it applies to the writers of both of these recent and apparently opposite books.

Their discussion reminds us that the God we pray to is far, far greater than any words we can use about him. We must use words because love and gratitude compel us to speak of him and to him, but the words will always fall short. You can't put God into a formula as you can a chemical compound. The precise constituents of water can be represented as  $H_2O$ ; there is no such formula to tell you about the nature of God. Where he is concerned, our language, which is human, can only provide images and similes, analogies and parallels to his nature, which is divine.

Both books agree about that, and I find it helpful. Look at this:

'Christianity was conceived with no vocabulary of its own. It had a message to proclaim, but no words of its own with which to express that message. In the New Testament we can see some of the titles, phrases, concepts with which it struggled to express the truth, beyond language, of a new dimension that had come into history.'

So when Christians talked about God in terms of the Father and the Son they were saying that the relationship between the two was *like* that of a human father and son. It was not  $H_2O$  language; it was an analogy, a likeness.

'It is fair to say that undue emphasis has been laid on the "Son". It is, after all, analogical language; what other language can one use of God?'

Those quotations are not from *Myth*, the book advocating a rethink of our statements about God and

Jesus. They are from *Truth*, the conservative book. And *Myth* agrees:

'All language about God is analogical; it is the expression of the unknown and inexpressible in terms of the known. This kind of truth is communicated—even conceived—in dramatic and poetic forms.'

And prayed that way, too. It's true that Michael Green in *Truth* gets very scornful when things are called 'poetic' but they can be poetic without being false. He himself talks of Jesus as 'the window into God'. Obviously he doesn't mean a literal window with a hinge or sashcord. He is using a metaphor, and to point that out is not to say that his statement is untrue. It is to say that the truth is so great that we can only point towards it with images.

Now consider this:

'Without the religious dimension, life would be senseless and endurance of its cruelty pointless; yet without the cross it would be impossible to believe in God. Faith demands a doctrine of atonement, and atonement means a conviction that God has somehow dealt with evil, with sin, with rebellion; that on the cross God in Christ entered into the suffering, the evil and the sin of his world—entered the darkness and transformed it into light, into blazing glory; that God himself took responsibility for the existence of evil in his creation; that he bore the pain of it and the guilt of it, accepting its consequences into himself; that he in his love reconciled his holiness to a sinful and corrupt humanity, justifying the ungodly, accepting man just as he is.'

That's not from the conservative book, it's from *Myth*. The writer is Frances Cornford and if I've got it right her concern is to say that the primary Christian conviction is of being confronted and saved by God through Jesus. Not a doctrine or a formula but a divine action and a human experience. Creeds and definitions are created by the backwash of the event.

'The Christian gospel adds to what philosophy has told us. Briefly, it has revealed to us that God is love and that God, being love, loves us tiny and imperfect creatures; loves us in our individuality and loves us collectively, loves man the person and man the collective on pilgrimage through the epochs of temporal history... Christianity teaches us that God so loves us that not only would he, if necessary, identify himself with our destiny and our fate in order to lead us to a triumph beyond that fate, but that he has actually done so. This is the meaning of the "incarnation".'

If you have a well-tuned ear you can detect the makings of an argument between the writers of the last two quotations, but what you can't miss, even with an ill-tuned ear, is that if you can pray with one of them you can pray with the other.

And I think there is spiritual help to be gained from the way in which the writers differ as well as the way in which they agree. Two things we need if we are to live and think and pray with confidence as Christians: one is a sense of mystery, the other is a sense of certainty. Each of these books seems to me to guard one of these necessities. One says God is so great



that he transcends every image we can use, every formula we can devise; and we must never forget it:

‘For it is the divine transcendence which alone judges, delivers and restores, as Jesus, in his teaching and in his person, communicates the power of transcendence (the Holy Spirit) to his disciples. God is with man, in man, only in his transcendence.’ (Myth)

Yes, says the other party, but he has revealed himself and we must never forget that:

‘We admit the greatness and transcendence of God. No religious mind can ultimately deny the mystery of God. The richness of his inner being far surpasses our powers of comprehension. On the other hand we believe that this mysterious and ineffable God, out of pure love for mankind, has made himself known to us, in the most direct and comprehensible way possible, by coming amongst us as one of us and sharing our life, its heights and depths, its joys and sorrows.’ (Truth)

He is ineffable mystery and yet revealed. He is revealed and yet remains ineffable mystery. Long may these scholars continue to see that we don’t forget one half of the statement or the other, because if we do we shall stop praying. God must be God or he is not worth praying to; God must be revealed or we have no approach to him.

I remember from more than 30 years ago something I heard Nathaniel Micklem say:

‘If you can’t grasp the doctrine of the Trinity that’s a pity, but don’t lose too much sleep over it. On the other hand if you can’t sing the Gloria then you do have a problem.’

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; a mystery to be worshipped with certainty.

RPS-BBC/TV

#### Health and Development . . . —(Continued from page 3)

primary health care. This approach aims at reaching rural people with a health care service which is accessible, acceptable and self-sufficient, consisting of very basic medical and nursing activities to meet the essential health needs of individuals, families and communities and to improve the quality of their lives. The system depends on local recruitment and local training of *villagers* as health workers who will remain in their own community to deliver basic health care after relatively short training periods.

Key features of the primary health care approach may be enumerated as follows:

1. Primary health care activities developed at the rural community level must respond to the felt, developmental needs of the community and may be intersectoral in character, i.e. related to agriculture, education, housing etc.
2. These activities should make maximum use of local resources available including indigenous healers and traditional birth attendants.

3. The health technologies utilized should be adapted to the stringent man-power and cost limitations characteristic of rural communities.
4. The village health workers should be chosen by the community itself and trained as close to the area they will serve as possible.
5. The design and extent of the service should be determined by the community itself which should give priority to the gradual elimination of what it regards as its most serious problems.

JAMES C. MCGILVRAY.

## THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MIZORAM

### The Role of Women—highly commendable

The not-so-known Christian community, the Mizo Synod of the N. E. India Presbyterian Church, is forging ahead towards self-sufficiency in the recent past. In this connection, mention may be made of the selfless service rendered by the women’s wing of the church.

The contribution of the women’s wing of the Mizo Synod to the central fund of the church last year has come upto 5 lakhs and 51 thousand rupees. The total increase within the past year is over one lakh. Besides this, the General Conference of the Women contributed substantially to the completion of a new house for mentally ill people, under the care of the Synod Hospital, Durtlang.

The secret source of their income is rather a simple thing like a collection of the free-will offering of a ‘Handful of rice’ from every Christian family within the region. The housewives are encouraged to keep any convenient container in which they can drop the handful of rice scooped out from the already measured rice for the family meal. They do this every time they are going to cook rice; normally twice a day. That little handful of rice does not make any difference to the need of the family at the time of eating, but it does make a tremendous contribution to the church annually.

Hitherto the work among the women has been done voluntarily, but the immensity of the work necessitates a full-time worker. The Synod Executive Committee, therefore, appoints one Miss Zomuani, B.D., as a woman worker with effect from February 1, 1978. It is hoped that more significant contribution will be made in course of time.

Another historic incident occurred on the last Sunday of January, 1978, in the Mission Veng Church. A prominent lady of that local church, Miss Saptawni, headmistress of the Presbyterian Church Girls’ School, an ex-M.L.A., daughter of the Rev. Liangkhaia (retired), has been elected to be the first woman Church Elder of the Mizo Presbyterian Church (Eldership is for life).

—(Rev.) Zaihmingthanga

Aizawl Theological College,

Aizawl, Mizoram. PIN 796001.



# *A Beloved Father-in-God Retires*

The American College Auditorium in Madurai was overflowing the other day with members from the churches of the Madurai-Ramnad Diocese. The occasion was that of a diocese bidding farewell and expressing their sentiments of gratitude and affection to their bishop who served them devotedly for 18 years and more. It was fitting that Dr. M. A. Thangaraj, Principal of the American College, who chaired the meeting when the C.S.I. congregation in Tambaram bade farewell to their then pastor to become the Bishop of Madurai-Ramnad, also chaired this meeting when the bishop was moving back to Tambaram to lead a retired life.

Bishop George Devadoss and his wife have been held in affection and esteem, in his diocese. They built up many new programmes during their episcopal service. Notable among them is the annual sale for the Board of Mission which in the last year brought a contribution i.e. in one day of about Rs. 1,25,000 from all over the diocese. They have proved that with commitment and imagination resources can be mobilised and a diocese challenged for its task of mission. Programme for self-reliance, to generate financial resources for the ongoing work of the diocese, has been another area. Women's work was very much strengthened in the last few years. Apostolate of the laity and Relief work in backward areas have been great concerns of the bishop. But above all, his heart was in the villages and with the poor people. It is well known that he chose to spend Christmas every year in a village congregation with village workers and people. One speaker said that while the Bishop has not been overly popular among the richer sections of the people in the diocese he was definitely the beloved of the poor, whose concern had priority in the Bishop's ministry.

Responding to the speeches of appreciation, the Bishop made two points which are theologically deep and significant. 'I have not finished, only attempted', he said modestly. It was his dear mother's counsel to him some years ago: 'When you have done anything successfully, never say "I have finished". There was only one who has ever *finished*, our Lord Jesus Christ!' Here was some wisdom, for all who are involved in any Christian ministry, particularly for those who have the good fortune of meeting with some success in their ministry. The Bishop also emphasised the centrality of the Church in the Christian faith. Institutions and individuals not rooted in the Church cannot live for long. Many Christians run from one place to another, from one preacher to another, as 'dried leaves blown in the air'. It is to the Church that the Lord said 'Fear not little flock', and gave the promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. 'Be loyal to the Church and your pastor, for it is within the

church that we have our roots, a place to grow and context to serve', were the words of not only episcopal wisdom, but also theological conviction. I have always appreciated the Bishop's strong ecclesiology and was thankful that he reminded a receptive of this audience!

Not all the bishops of the church are equally concerned with theology. But Bishop Devadoss' sermons and addresses, though not always exciting in delivery, have been theologically very deep, and we have often wondered at his resourceful mind that brings up theological insights and ideas. In a memorable sermon, he expounded how God sometimes saves us *from* our sufferings and sometimes *through* our sufferings. He is a great reader and is noted for the careful preparation of his sermon—every word and phrase carefully chosen. The Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary hopes to publish a collection of his sermons for the benefit of the wider church. The Bishop always desired that the Church be theologically more alive. In a conservative Church, which is carried away by the eloquence of preachers and which suspects any new theological and Biblical insight, he has been a tower of strength and support to the ministry of the seminary.

Silence has been his weapon in committees and meetings, also in situations of conflict and disagreement. He would keep quiet till the heat of arguments was spent and come out with a wise observation or comment which will clinch the argument. Very few can outdo him in hard and patient work, from early into late hours of the day. His carefulness in reading through the minutes, or checking addresses of letters being mailed, is legendary. Above all, his deep trust in God and his life of prayer have been exemplary. Legend has it that when the bishop, 18 years ago, was being considered for the bishopric and a group of church leaders went to see him to ascertain his suitability and willingness, he was found on his knees in the church. They knew, then, they had found the right man.

It was said in the meeting that the 18 years also had its 'valleys'. The Bishop would not 'bow to insolent might'! Some thought he was ruthless in dealing with some people. No one would claim, least of all, the bishop himself, that all his decisions were perfect. There were difficult persons to handle, some self-seeking and some serving for unworthy causes, as it is in every situation. Some pastors did not prove to be as committed as one expected or as they professed. The Bishop said once, in a retreat for graduating theological students, that during his ministry 23 pastors offered to resign and he was able to convert 21 of them. Those outside probably knew only the story of the two who left and wondered why they were not prevented from doing so! The 18 years were not always smooth or easy but they were steered through by a man who put his trust in God. I once overheard a conversation. A senior bishop was asked by a pastor, 'There seem to be so many problems in the Madurai Diocese: What do you think of the bishop?' The answer was 'Anyone other than a man of God would not have the faith and courage to come out through them with such peace and patience'.

A man of few words, one would imagine that the Bishop is always serious in his words. He is not an extrovert; but his subtle humour and innocent laughter made his company delightful. I remember, once after a meal in our house, he forgetfully took the napkin with him which he promptly returned. At the next



meal, by the forgetfulness of the hostess no napkins were provided. He was quick to note this and made a joke on himself that it was because of napkin-lifters like him; that everybody else was denied napkins this time! Affectionate reminiscences were made in the meetings by a pastor who remarked how if the bishop folded the arms of his cassock, it was a sign of the Bishop's pleasure and if his hands grasped the pectoral cross, then the visitor knew he must get ready for a 'NO'—Indeed, then, the Bishop was up to anything! We are thankful to God that some of our bishops are so human.

As I came out of the meeting with a feeling of gratitude and joy, for the past 18 years of Madurai-Ramnad, some questions came up in my mind. Can the Church provide the Bishops who retire, some useful avenues of service, through which their long parish, administrative and episcopal experiences can still be used? Do we provide adequately for the physical needs of the Bishops in retirement so that they can spend the rest of their lives carefree, but also with opportunities to keep up their intellectual and theological interests. I met a retired Bishop, the other day, who didn't have money to buy a hat, and, see his greatness, he wouldn't accept a gift towards that. In this particular retirement, I had one more question. I understand the Bishop was given very few days notice to hand over responsibilities, settle matters and move out. Was this a realistic expectation? Much agony could have been spared, much haste could have been spared for the people of the diocese, if sufficient time had been given. I saw people streaming to the Bishop's house and leaving the house in tears not having had time to say farewell to him. A congregation from about 80 miles away came with their confirmands and asked for a confirmation service, which the Bishop so graciously obliged, two hours before the diocesan farewell meeting. Couldn't retirements be effected with greater graciousness?

Arasaradi.

SAMUEL AMIRTHAM.

## *World Conference on Faith, Science and Future*

A world conference bringing together scientists and theologians to explore the use of science and technology as transforming forces in the service of humanity and for justice and peace will take place at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology under the auspices of the World Council of Churches 12-24 July, 1979.

Entitled 'World Conference on Faith, Science and the Future,' the conference will be attended by some 500 scientists and theologians from around the world. They are to 'look for the meaning of faith in a world in which science and technology are transforming forces that both liberate and destroy persons and human values,' an announcement declares.

The conference will be the largest WCC event in North America in 25 years or since the world church organization held its second assembly in Evanston, Illinois, in 1954.

MARCH 1978]

Dr. David Rose, professor of nuclear engineering at the MIT and one of the main architects of the conference, together with Dr. Paul Abrecht, director of the WCC's Church and Society section in Geneva, said that the need for in-depth discussions bringing theology and technology together 'reflects a growing recognition that problems of finding alternate sources of energy, feeding the world's people, conserving resources and protecting the environment must be top priority for all. These problems are acting as a catalyst bringing together people of conscience in all disciplines to tackle the need jointly.'

Dr. Abrecht pointed out that regional conferences in other countries will precede the MIT gathering. Their results will be reported to the world meeting.

The MIT conference and the preparatory meetings are part of the WCC programme emphasis: 'Towards Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society,' which was mandated by the WCC's 5th Assembly at Nairobi in December, 1975, in the conviction that 'Christianity must challenge many of the assumptions underlying modern technological advances,' Dr. Abrecht said.

It was emphasized that the conference is called as a serious effort to reintegrate the scientific, technological, humanistic and religious aspects that have been too much fragmented by traditional disciplinary approaches.

E.P.S.

## *Families Suffer without Television*

Five American families recently went without television for one month and experienced withdrawal symptoms.

Ladd Neuman, assistant news editor of the Detroit Free Press, came up with the idea for a series of articles on how it is to live without TV. The newspaper offered US\$500 to each family willing to take part in the experiment. Amazingly, they had trouble finding families willing to take up the offer. After approaching 120 households, with 93 outright refusals, five willing and suitable families were found.

TV mechanics turned off the sets, so there would be no cheating, and Free Press reporters spent much time with the families to see how things were going.

The withdrawal symptoms were similar to those of the two German families in West Berlin who also went without television for a month in a similar experiment.

One of the American couples became chain smokers. Another couple stopped talking. Two couples spent more time in bed. One couple read the newspaper more carefully—for things to talk about.

You might think that everyone started reading more as a result of the experiment, but this wasn't the case.

When the month was over, the five families went on an orgy of viewing to make up for the time they had lost.

ACTION: No. 26



# Karnataka Central Diocese

## Administration

The initial stage of reorganisation came into full effect after the Diocesan Council in October. The elected Officers are now completely honorary and the major burden of administration rests with the Administrative Officer for general and property matters and the Accounts Officer for financial matters. However, the elected Officers are still rendering a great deal of service and freely giving their time, for which the Diocese is grateful. At the Diocesan Council the Rev. T. E. David, a senior Presbyter, was elected Vice-President; Mr. P. V. Kuruvila, a retired Officer of the Indian Revenue Service, continues as Treasurer; Mr. Paul Siromoni, a layman on the staff of St. Mark's Cathedral, was elected as Secretary; Rev. S. Vasanthakumar, a young Presbyter, was elected Assistant Secretary; Rev. E. Deenadayalan, a young Presbyter, was elected Associate Treasurer. The team of Officers has both the experience of older people and the enthusiasm of the younger—that is not to say that the older members are lacking in enthusiasm or the younger members are devoid of experience!

A further stage in reorganisation is now planned. As the overall work of the Diocese increases it is being found necessary to appoint full-time people for specialised areas of work. Departments are being created to be based at the Diocesan Office. In addition to the Property and Finance Departments, the Departments of Youth Work and Social Economic Concerns have already come into being. Others will follow. The vision is that the Diocesan Office will become more of a programme based centre than a mere administrative machinery. It must be a centre of inspiration. This is already being realised. The Office is full of Diocesan workers daily, who are conferring together on their programmes and sharing their problems. What we now have to do is work out the machinery whereby all the activities can be co-ordinated. We are becoming increasingly aware of the overlapping of one area of work into another.

## Property Development

The problem of shortages of cement is again with us and this has slowed down the pace a little—for which the Treasurer is grateful since his hope for resources were also delayed. Despite this, four new Churches have been completed and dedicated; four new parsonages completed and dedicated; Community hall completed and opened; Crèche Nurses Training Centre completed and opened. In addition to this there have

been several major alterations and renovations. Three parsonages are in various stages of construction and five others are approved and will be started when finance is available. Six new Church buildings have been approved and will also be taken up when finance is available. Negotiations are in progress for sites in three new areas. Three new Crèche buildings have been approved.

Diocesan resources for capital investment is from the sale or acquisition by Government of existing property. The Diocese meets the cost of sites and parsonages in full. The local congregation now has to contribute as much as 50% towards the cost of Church building.

## Finance

Except for the child-care programmes which cost Rs. 80,000 p.m., the revenue budget is met from internal resources. With a constant struggle, the giving of the people supports the Ministry. Property income supports the administration and other programmes. Increased property income is beginning to reduce the debts of previous years. The Finance Committee is planning a five year financial programme for the Diocese. At the Diocesan Council a project to reduce overseas dependency on child-care programmes was launched. Some members made donations on the spot. The first fund-raising effort for this project realised over Rs. 6,000. It is a massive target to be reached but efforts will continue to build up an endowment fund.

## The Ministry

There continues to be a good number of qualified and dedicated young men offering for the Ministry, though the response from the Kannada area is rather discouraging. There are six men under training in the various theological Colleges. Three are undergoing pre-College exposure period.

A special meeting of the Diocesan Council is being convened in 1978. One of the major subjects for discussion is the ordination of women to the Presbyterate. The 1977 Council passed the necessary Synod constitutional amendments on this.

Further training of the Ministry has been under review. Presbyters are encouraged to be continually preparing themselves for their ministry. Two Presbyters have been granted scholarship through the Synod and will be going overseas in 1978. All Junior Ministers are required to learn a second local language with a view to being able to minister in at least two languages. This will considerably ease the stationing problem.

The revised Synod scales of pay were introduced from April and other allowances increased. With the general increase in salaries this has to be kept under constant review to keep the Ministry free from financial stress.

## Lay Preachers

A further 30 candidates passed the preliminary test and are in various stages of their two year study programme. They also attended a three-day residential training course. Bishop's licence was granted to 13 people



who had satisfied all the requirements. The Committee found a rather high drop out rate of those who began the course and attention is being given to this.

### Youth Work

This has been a very active year for Youth Work. The benefit of appointing a full-time worker is now being reaped. There have been many and varied programmes. These have expressed the various concerns the whole Church should be involved in. Social concerns and evangelistic outreach have found expression together and not as opposing forces—as sometimes the adults make them appear. The 'Blood is Life' Campaign was launched in the Churches through the Young people. A Diocesan Amateur Dramatic Society has been formed and the first production staged with great success. Training Courses have been conducted at Pastorate, Area and Diocesan level. All Night Prayer groups have sprung up in two areas at the initiative of the young people themselves. Altogether it has been a most encouraging year.

### Sunday Schools

Training Courses have been held at Area level. However, this is one area of work which needs strengthening. The new Committee has started its work in real earnest and is planning a one year training Course for Sunday School Teachers. This will consist of week-end residential courses every month and assignments in between. It is being experimented within the Tumkur area. We hope to have much progress to report next year.

### Missionary Work

The first converts in the Kanakapura Mission Field were baptised in September. The Deacon has been provided with a Cassette player and tapes. A lot more input is necessary and it is hoped to station a Presbyter who is fully committed to this work. Local giving from the Pastorates has increased but it is still far short of what it should be. The Youth All Night Prayer Group plans to support two workers in the area. This work has still not gained the momentum it should have.

### Boarding Homes and Hostels

A new Home for girls has been started in Kolar Gold Fields. A Central Admission Committee has been formed to ensure that those in greatest need are admitted rather than those who apply to a particular Home where there happen to be vacancies. This year there were 800 applications for 50 places. The C.C.F. is withdrawing its support for Boarding Homes in favour of a new policy to care for children in their own homes. This leaves Mitralaya and Goodwill Homes in a financial crisis and the Diocese will have to find support for them.

A New Life Centre has been planned to be started in Krishnavaram, K.G.F. and has been approved for support by CSI-CCC. Fifteen children who have not had schooling will be admitted on a three-year cycle. They

will be taught skills and crafts for self-employment, functional literacy, social awareness with the ultimate purpose that they will be instruments of change in their villages.

The family Helper Project has been started and so far 80 children have been enrolled for this. This cares for children within the family set-up under the supervision of a Social Worker. This field of work is now being transferred to the Social and Economic Concerns Department.

In the past Domestic staff in Boarding Homes have been kept at subsistence level. The new understanding of social justice has drawn attention to their situation. New scales of pay and other allowances, including provision for their future have been introduced in all the Homes. This raises the problem that the Homes may not be able to employ as many staff but those who are employed will be given a fair deal.

A Diocesan level sports meet was held which proved a great success and brought the children from different Homes together.

A commission is re-examining the roles of the University Girls' Hostel and the Working Girls' Hostel. This process of continual assessment is necessary in all areas of work.

### Medical Work

The new complex of the CSI Hospital, Bangalore constructed at a cost of Rs. 1 crore was declared open by Sri B. D. Jatti, Acting President of India in June, 1977. The departments are moving in by phases. A new chapel was dedicated in November.

The CSI Hospital, Chikballapur, has continued to serve the real area. Leprosy work has been intensified.

The CSI Hospital at Chennapatna has continued its work under the overall supervision of the CSI Hospital, Bangalore. A lot of thought has been going into the future of the work there and a clearer picture should emerge during the next year.

A proposal for medical work in the K.G.F. area from the Area Council was approved and begun. This has yet to be stabilised.

The Karnataka Health Ordinance is still in force and Diocesan hospitals come under its purview. This has had an adverse effect on the service the hospitals can offer. There are limits on the charges which can be levied. This has meant that fees cannot be charged on the wealthy to subsidise treatment for the poor. In the case of Diocesan hospitals the Ordinance has benefited the rich and prevented treatment of the poor. The Ordinance was presumably intended to have the opposite effect. This has been pointed out to the Government but so far no action has been taken to remedy the situation.

### Social and Economic Concerns

This department has been active during the year. The training Course for a core of 20 Diocesan workers has continued successfully. There have been difficulties in



the experiment of having Social Workers working in the rural areas. However, much is being learnt from the experience. Several Pastorates are now initiating their own programmes and much of the work of the department will be to encourage and co-ordinate programmes taken up at the grass roots level. Social awareness and responsibility continue to grow in the congregations. The tendency is to move towards smaller programmes. This may mean not much glamour to report but it is felt that the overall cumulative results will be greater. Programmes which involve a growing dependency on outside resources are avoided.

### Training Centre in Child Care

The training Centre has moved into the new building which was opened in March. The new Superintendent has been confirmed in service. The training has now become well established but is alive to the necessity of change and adjustment to needs as they arise. There are plenty of candidates applying for the Course and also demand for their services after training.

### Creches

More Crèches have been opened during the year bringing the total to eleven. Three new buildings are under construction. The Pre-School Child Care Committee is still a Sub-Committee under the Social and Economic Concerns Committee. Thought is now being given to give this a more solid structure.

### Diocesan Magazine

After a lot of ups and downs the magazine has survived its first year of publication and is now assured of its future. The target of 1,000 subscribers has been reached and circulation and interest in the magazine are steadily increasing. One important aim is yet to be realised. It was not intended to be one way traffic just to impart news of the Diocese and to contain articles written by the establishment. A major effort is now being directed to get response from the readers by way of comment and articles. The Editorial Board has already mapped out the four issues for 1978.

### Conclusion

Spiritual Renewal is the theme set by the Council and this will continue for the next two years. There has been a most enthusiastic and encouraging response to this from all sections and areas of the Diocese. All the Standing Committees have been examining their work in relation to this theme. It is not seen as a matter for a specialised Committee. It has been discussed in relation to Evangelism, Institutions, Education, Health, Social Concerns, Finance, Property etc. This takes us into 1978 with confidence and hope.

K. E. GILL,  
*Bishop.*

## *Important Resolutions of the Executive Committee of the Church of South India, held on the 19th January in Kottayam*

### 1. Krishna-Godavari Diocese :

The Synod would take over the Krishna-Godavari Diocese for its administration and an administrative committee was to be formed in consultation with the concerned bishop. The Executive Committee decided to send a Peace Mission consisting of ten members to the Krishna-Godavari Diocese (i) to undertake renewal and healing, (ii) to go into the root cause of divisive forces, (iii) meeting people and (iv) suggesting ways and means to achieve peace in the diocese.

2. Boards for the appointments of Bishops in Vellore, North Kerala, Madurai-Ramnad and Karimnagar were appointed. The inauguration of the new Diocese of Karimnagar was expected to take place on the 26th February 1978.

### 3. The Working Committee :

The following members were elected to the Working Committee for the Biennium 1978-79 along with the officers of the Synod.

1. The Rt. Rev. D. J. Ambalavanar
2. The Rt. Rev. B. G. Prasada Rao
3. The Rev. N. Benjamin
4. The Rev. William Moses
5. Mr. K. Samuel
6. Mr. Bhaskar A. Bhasme.



## Letters to the Editor

### 'SARX'

Dear Sir,

At the recently held C.S.I. Synod meetings in Kottayam, Mr. P. A. Sathiasatchy who gave one of the main addresses passed some critical remarks against some Bible translators, and they call for a comment. He questioned the translation of the Greek word 'sarx' as 'man' or as 'human being' (Jn. i. 14). His objection seemed to be based on two assumptions: that 'sarx' has only one meaning, namely 'flesh', and secondly that the Greek language has only one word for 'man' and that is 'anthropos' which John would have used in i. 14 if he wanted to say 'man' or 'human being'. Both the assumptions are wrong: Arndt-Gingrich's lexicon lists no less than six different meanings for 'sarx', and one of them is 'man'. The GOOD NEWS BIBLE's rendering 'The Word became a human being' and the new Tamil version's திருவாக்கு மானிடஞ்செய்தார் can both be easily defended. Mr. Sathiasatchy's suggestion ஊன் ஆகிவிட்டார் cannot be easily understood by the average Tamil reader.

Yours sincerely,

A. E. INBANATHAN  
General Secretary  
Bible Society of India

### MORE INFORMATION

Dear Editor,

Hope you would allow me to make the following suggestion.

The official reports of the proceedings of the Synod, and its Executive and Working Committees are now available only to its members. Many important resolutions are passed by them. Those resolutions are not now available to the ordinary members of the C.S.I., though literally affecting them. Brief reports as to the proceedings and details of important resolutions may be arranged to be furnished in the *South India Churchman*, so that all members of the C.S.I. are in the know of things.

K. T. NINEN  
Advocate  
Kottayam

## Consultation on Conciliar Unity

About seventy church dignitaries and Bishops participated in a national consultation on *Conciliar Unity*, jointly sponsored by the Ecumenical Christian Centre and the World Council of Churches from the 31st January to 4th February in Whitefield, Bangalore.

The central point of discussion at this four-day consultations was 'Conciliar Unity'—a new concept to bring the churches into deeper union without losing their identities. The Church of North India, The Church of South India and the Mar Thoma Church have already made their decisions to enter into Union. The Consultation evolved plans to further unity between all churches in India through mutual collaboration. The socio-political issues were very much in their discussions. The Consultation challenged all Christians to participate in the political life of the country and help in giving economic content to the present-day democracy. The priority should be to evolve a new political structure which caters to the needs of the hungry millions.

*Ecumenical Christian Centre.*

### REGISTRATION OF NEWSPAPERS (CENTRAL)

(RULES 1956)

*Statement about ownership and other Particulars about newspaper SOUTH INDIA CHURCHMAN to be published in the first issue of every year after the last day of February*

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(SEE RULE 8)

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*I, Mrs. D. L. Gopal Ratnam, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.*

(Sd.) MRS. D. L. GOPAL RATNAM,  
*Signature of Publisher.*

Dated 5-3-1978.



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Fees: Rs. 100 for board and lodging.  
Rs. 10 for registration.

Conducted under the auspices of CEEFI, the Christian Education Department of the Evangelical Fellowship of India.

Contact: The Rev. Francis Sunderaraj.

6-3-609/172, Anandnagar,  
Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh-500 004.

## 5TH CEEFI TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Dates: 11th-14th April, 1978.

Place: Kottayam, Kerala.

Speakers: Dr. David Woodward.

Mr. D. John Richard.

Rev. Theodore Williams, etc.

Those who are involved in the Christian Education Ministry are requested to attend this Conference. Further information can be had from the undersigned.

M-96 Greater Kailash-1  
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M. M. DAS  
CEEFI Secretary

## AWARD OF LANE MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIP

One Lane Medical Scholarship is now available for a female Medical Student studying at the Madras Medical College. Candidates must be of the Reformed Faith. Applications should be made before the 12th March 1978 to the Honorary Chairman and Secretary, Lane Medical Trust, St. Andrew's Church, Egmore, Madras 600 008. The following details should be furnished:

Full name, Date of Birth and Year of Study, Church Denomination. Confidential certified statement of Family Income. Testimonials from Parish Minister. Certificate of Medical Fitness. Certified Records of previous examinations.

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[MARCH 1978]



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### DR. AKBAR ABDUL-HAQQ NINTH ALL-INDIA INSTITUTE ON EVANGELISM, JUNE 5-11, 1978 KODAIKANAL, T.N., S. INDIA

The Ninth All-India Institute on Evangelism will be conducted under the leadership of Dr. Akbar Abdul-Haqq, Associate Evangelist of Dr. Billy Graham. These six days of practical training and instruction on Evangelism in India today will benefit both Pastors and laymen. The theme for the week will be 'Life in Christ and Christian Witnessing'. Lectures from outstanding resource leaders from throughout India as well as Dr. Akbar Abdul-Haqq will constitute the daily programme in addition to Bible Study and Prayer groups. There will be a time of Christian worship and inspirational periods to hear from delegates from all over the country.

Pastors, lay persons, and youth are invited to apply for this Institute. Only those who have NEVER ATTENDED any of Dr. Haqq's former Institutes should apply as others desiring this opportunity will be considered. All sessions will be in English to conserve time, so those not understanding or speaking this language SHOULD NOT APPLY. Each delegate will be asked to provide 20% of their own travel to the Institute. Food and lodging will be provided during the week at Kodaikanal. Please send for an application blank to Dr. K. Devasahayam, Door No. 5-87-98, IInd Line, Lakshmipuram, Guntur-522 002, A.P., S. India. Final date for applications will be May 1st, 1978 and only 150 delegates will be selected by Dr. Akbar Abdul-Haqq. Please be prompt in responding.

Yours in the Master's Service,

(Sd.) K. DEVASAHAYAM,  
Associate Director for India.

Guntur,  
16-1-1978.

MARCH 1978]

## SAT TAL ASHRAM

The summer session will be from May 21 to June 11. Individuals or families desiring accommodation, or cottage, may please write early. People of all faith are welcome.

The comprehensive 3-week program under various able leaders will consist of: Bible studies, Meditation, Indigenous methods, Evangelism and Mission, Personal Experience, Worship, Discipleship, Stewardship, Church Growth, Koinonia Cells, Social Concern, Comparative Religions, Care of Seekers and Converts, Group discussions, Work periods, Music, Games, Boating and Swimming, plus many moments of quiet.

The total cost of meals, accommodation, electricity and water, will be about Rs. 9.50 per head per day. Families may, however, cook on their own. Substantial Scholarship available only to about thirty selected Pastors of all denominations.

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Sat Tal Ashram,  
P.O. Bhowali,  
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### PASTORS DESIROUS OF TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP AND CONCESSIONS FOR ATTENDING SAT TAL ASHRAM SHOULD APPLY TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.

### Land to Sky Expedition!—(Continued from page 5)

go for the crops. Sometimes the harvest of a whole village is destroyed overnight. According to newspaper reports, nearly 75% of the standing paddy crops of the territory has been damaged.

I have recently seen a Tamil film entitled 'A Violet flower winks at you' in which a young woman who decks her hair with a violet flower, makes the young boy of the neighbouring house fall in love with her. This ultimately leads to violence, murder, imprisonment and disappointment in love. I do not know why the author has chosen this title. But after seeing the violet coloured bamboo flowers on my way down to Silchar, I was able to see some meaning in it. When we climbed up to Aizawl, our friend who accompanied us told me of the impending famine of the flowering of bamboo. The Mizos must be saved from this disaster. Their faith in God and their resourcefulness will no doubt give them courage to fight this menace and emerge victorious.

Here is an idea that occurs to me. Our churches can organise tours and visits to Mizoram and promote relationship and understanding with each other. The Church of Mizoram is a church built on the rock. The Mizos are brave people and we must meet them.

D. PACKIAMUTHU



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One Hindi Pandit	Hindi Pandit's Training	Rs. 350	
One Doctor	M.B.B.S.	Rs. 900	Lady Preferred
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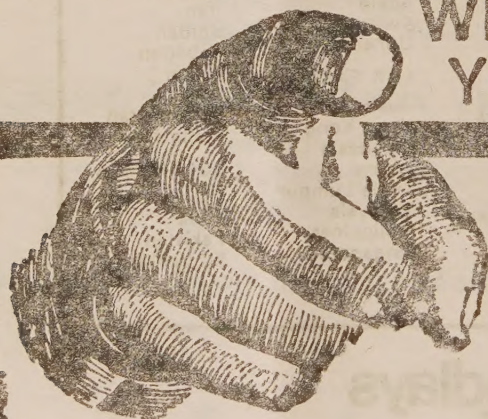
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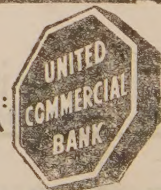
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